The Journey of Intentions

By Mansoor Ali Shah
لَا إِلٰهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

Baba and Mansoor are sitting in their garden after evening prayers. The sky is painted with hues of orange and pink.

Mansoor: Baba, today my teacher told us a Hadith about intentions. He said that every action depends on what we intend in our hearts. Can you tell me more about it?

Baba: Of course, my dear Mansoor. This Hadith is one of the most important teachings of our beloved Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). He said, “The reward of deeds depends upon the intention, and every person will get the reward according to what he has intended.” This means that whatever we do, Allah looks at what is in our hearts.

Mansoor: But Baba, how do our intentions change the reward?

Baba: Let me tell you a story. There were two boys, Ahmed and Kareem, who decided to help clean their mosque. Ahmed did it because he loved Allah and wanted to please Him. Kareem, however, did it because he wanted people to praise him. Tell me, Mansoor, whose effort do you think was more valuable in the sight of Allah?

Mansoor: Ahmed’s, because he did it for Allah!

Baba: Exactly! Our actions only have true meaning when they are done for the right reasons. If we do something just for show, we may receive praise from people, but Allah will not reward us for it.

Mansoor: Oh! So if I help my friend in school just so the teacher calls me a good boy, then I won’t get the same reward from Allah?

Baba: That’s right, my son. But if you help your friend because you sincerely care for them and want Allah to be pleased with you, then your reward will be with Him.

Mansoor: I understand now, Baba! From now on, I will always check my intentions before doing anything. I want all my good deeds to be for Allah!

Baba: MashaAllah, that’s the best way to live, my dear Mansoor. Always remember, Allah knows what is in our hearts, and He rewards us for our sincerity.

Mansoor: Thank you, Baba! I will always try to have a pure intention in everything I do!

Baba: That’s my good boy. May Allah bless you and guide you always.